

Personal Prayer for Forgiveness



*FIND A QUIET SPACE; LIGHT A CANDLE AND PLACE A CRUCIFIX
BESIDE IT.*

SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

I come before you, O Lord, aware of my sinfulness.
May I trust in your abundant mercy.

I confess to almighty God
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,
through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;
therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,
all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.

Amen.

Lord, have mercy.	Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.	Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.	Lord, have mercy.

Let us pray

Merciful God,

You showed your glory to our fallen race by sending your Son to confound the powers of death.

Call us forth from sin's dark tomb. Break the bonds which hold us, that we may believe and proclaim Christ, the cause of our freedom and the source of life, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

Amen

1st Reading (JB): Ezekiel 37:12-14

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live.

The Lord says this: I am going to open your graves; I mean to raise you from your graves, my people, and lead you back to the soil of Israel. And you will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, my people. And I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live, and I shall resettle you on your own soil; and you will know that I, the Lord, have said and done this - it is the Lord who speaks.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 50 (51) MISERERE

Have mercy on in God, in your kindness
In your compassion blot out my offence
O wash me more and more from my guilt
and cleanse me from my sin.

My offences truly I know them,
my sin is always before me
Against you, you alone, have I sinned,
what is evil in your sight I have done

That you may be justified when you give sentence
and be without reproach when you judge.
O see, in guilt I was born,
a sinner was I conceived.

Indeed you love truth in the heart
then in the secret of my heart teach me wisdom.
O purify me, then I shall be clean,
O wash me, I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me hear rejoicing and gladness,
That the bones you have crushed may revive.
From my sins turn away your face and blot out all my guilt.

A pure heart create for me, O God,
Put a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence
Nor deprive me of your holy spirit.

Give me again the joy of your help,
With a spirit of fervor sustain me,
That I may teach transgressors your ways
And sinners may return to you.

O rescue me, God, my helper,
And my tongue shall ring out your goodness.
O Lord, open my lips,
And my mouth shall declare your praise.

GOSPEL: MARK 12:28-34

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

This is the first commandment, and the second is similar to it.

One of the scribes came up to Jesus and put a question to him, 'Which is the first of all the commandments?' Jesus replied, 'This is the first: Listen, Israel, the Lord our God is the one Lord, and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: You must love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.' The scribe said to him, 'Well spoken, master; what you have said is true: that he is one and there is no other. To love with all your heart, with all your understanding and strength and to love your neighbour as yourself, this is far more important than any holocaust or sacrifice.' Jesus, seeing how wisely he had spoken said, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' And after that no one dared to question him any more.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Prayer, fasting and almsgiving are the three pillars of Lent. Let us reflect upon our Lenten time in light of these three aspects of our pilgrimage towards Easter.

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Prayer is the intentional habit of paying attention to the presence of God. It is being aware that we are part of a bigger story, that our lives form part of a bigger picture. Our prayers don't change God – they change us.

- Do I see God's presence in my ordinary daily living?
- Do I take some time each day to be quiet or still?
- Do I read or listen to Scripture regularly?
- Do I see God in all creation – in people, in places, in the environment?
- Do I make prayer a daily habit or do I only pray when I want from God?
- Do I place the Sunday celebration of Word and Eucharist central to my Sunday routine?

Fasting is about leaving space in our lives for God. It is not just about food, but it is about all aspects of our lives. Fasting needs to include not just the stomach, but also the mind and heart. It is a spiritual discipline that can direct our attention to the deeper things in life.

- Have I given up some of my time and spent it with loved ones, or the sick and the house bound?
- Have we given some time to spiritual reading or quality reflection time?
- Have I given up words of criticism, negativity, gossip and taken up words of affirmation, gratitude, kindness?
- Have I given up some food or drink, and become more conscious of my spiritual hunger and thirst?
- Have I given up rushing meals and instead, taken time to sit at table with others and enjoyed the food and company?
- Have I given up a hardened or prejudiced heart and prayed to forgive people who have hurt me and have I allowed anger to be transformed into patience, self-interest into compassion, suspicion into trust, loneliness into hospitality, and alienation into friendship?

Almsgiving is a practical way in which we show our concern for justice. We offer the gifts God has given us and share them for the common good. It helps us to realise that all things belong to God and that we are merely care-takers of the world resources.

- Have I been thankful for all the blessings and gifts God has given me?
- Have I turned away from apathy and indifference and become involved in a social justice or charitable project?
- Have I made an effort to see people of other nationalities, other creeds, other cultures, as my brothers and sisters?
- Have I offered some of my money, my goods, my talents to those who are in need?
- Have I challenged others when I have heard racist comments or judgmental statements?
- Have I been willing to overcome self-centeredness and selfishness, and serve the community through building-up the common good of all?

Lent is the journey to the great heart of our faith – the Paschal Mystery. It is a time of grace and renewal. May we be conscience of the ways in which God is calling us to conversion and transformation, and may we co-operate with God's loving presence so that we can come to Easter with mind and heart renewed.

PRAYER IN SILENCE

Pause to consider and name the areas of your life which are in need of God's compassion, mercy and healing. Imagine the faces of those people with whom you may need to be reconciled.

LITANY OF MERCY:

- bearer of compassion: *Be merciful to me, a sinner*
- shepherd of the lost: *Be merciful to me, a sinner*
- friend of the wayward: *Be merciful to me, a sinner*
- mender of the broken-hearted: *Be merciful to me, a sinner*
- healer of the wounded: *Be merciful to me, a sinner*
- lover of the contrite: *Be merciful to me, a sinner*
- peace of the ages: *Be merciful to me, a sinner*
- light in the darkness: *Be merciful to me, a sinner*
- merciful judge: *Be merciful to me, a sinner*
- Saviour of the world: *Be merciful to me, a sinner*

God of new life, ease our anxieties, and fill our minds and spirits with trust in the approaching feast of re-birth. Lift the burdens of our hearts so that we may join the praise of God's new creation.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Our Father

In all humility, we dare to pray:

**Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
graciously grant peace in our days,
that, by the help of your mercy,
we may be always free from sin
and safe from all distress,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

**For the kingdom,
the power and the glory are yours
now and for ever.**

If gathered with others, share a sign of peace and reconciliation.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Almighty and all-merciful God,
lover of the human race, healer of all our wounds,
in whom there is no shadow of death, save us through your compassion
and fill us with confidence in your gracious mercy.
By the strength of your love destroy all that ails us
and renew our trust that hope will never die.
In these sacred days, may the light of Easter, the triumph of life,
shine upon us and the whole human family and renew the face of the
earth.
Through Jesus Christ, the Lord risen from the dead,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Holy Mary, intercessor of the sinner, *pray for us.*
St Joseph, guardian of us all, *pray for us.*

May God bless us, keep us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.